Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7999

CONFIDENTIAL KINGSTON 2312

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS EAID, PFOR, JM

SUBJECT P M MANLEY ANNOUNCES RURAL EDUCATION LOAN

- 1. AT LARGE, AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION PRIZE-GIVING CEREMONY ATTENDED BY TEACHERS AND CHILDREN FROM ALL THE SCHOOLS IN JAMAICA HELD UNDER AUSPICES OF MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE AT TRINITYVILLE IN ST THOMAS JUNE 12, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY ANNOUNCED THAT WITH THE SUPPORT OF AID TWO NEW AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS WERE TO BE OPENED, ONE IN THE EASTERN AND ONE IN WESTERN PARTS OF JAMAICA
- 2. AMBASSADOR ATTENDED AT INVITATION OF MINISTER OF EDUCATION. PRESENT ON PLATFORM WERE EDUCATION AND AGRICULTURE MINISTERS, THEIR PERMANENT SECRETARIES, MRS. MANLEY, VARIOUS GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL PERSONNEL, AND A NUMBER OF REPRESENTATIVES OF COMMERCIAL FIRMS, INDIVIDUALS AND ASSOCIATIONS WHO WERE DONORS OF SOME 70 PRIZES AND AWARDS.
- 3. ONLY OTHER DIPLOMAT PRESENT WAS CUBAN AMBASSADOR, WHO WAS INRTRODUCED BY PRIME MINISTER AT END OF HIS SPEECH IN ANNOUNCING THAT THE CUBAN GOVERNMENT WAS AWARDING FOURTEEN-DAY TRIPS TO CUBA TO THE CHAMPION BOY, GIRL, AND CONFIDENTIAL

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TEACHER. THESE AWARDS WERE MADE CONSIDERABLE FANFARE

AND RECEIVED GREAT APPLAUSE FROM THE LARGE CROWD.

4. PRIME MINSTER ESCAPED BY HELICOPTER SHORTLY AFTER CEREMONIES AND IN BRIEF CHAT GAVE NO OPPORTUNITY FOR COMMENT, NOT THAT I ESPECIALLY WANTED TO MAKE ANY IN THE CONTEXT. I DID, HOWEVER, EXPRESS SOME SURPRISE TO EDUCATION MINISTER COOKE AT THE ANNOUNCEMENT. HE SAID THE PRIME MINISTER HAD PRIOR TO THE SPEECH ASKED HIM WHETHER IT WAS "ALL RIGHT TO MAKE IT" AND HE HAD SAID HE THOUGHT IT WAS. HE WENT ON TO SPEAK WITH SATISFACTION OF HIS TRIP TO WASHINGTON AND SAID HE WAS AWARE OF THE EFFORTS I HAD BEEN MAKING ON BEHALF OF JAMAICA. IR REMINDED HIM THAT THERE WERE DIVERGENCES OF OPINION IN WASHINGTON ON SOME OF HER ACTIONS, AND THAT THE ANNOUNCEMENT COULD BE PREMATURE BUT THAT I HOPED THINGS WOULD WORK OUT.

5. THE "DAILY NEWS" OF FRIDAY JUNE 13 BANNER-HEADLINED
"TWO NEW RURAL FARM SCHOOLS PLANNED" ALONG WITH A PICTURE
OF THE CUBAN AMBASSADOR CONGRATULATING THE CHAMPION BOY
AND GIRL. THE TEXT REPORTED THAT "MR. MANLEY SAID NEGOTIATIONS
WERE GOING ON BETWEEN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MINISTRY
OF AGRICULTURE AND THE USAID TO BUILD THE SCHOOLS". FRONT
PAGE DAILY GLEANER STORY REPORTED "NEW SCHOOLS WERE
COMING ABOUT AS RESULT NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENT INVOLVING MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE
AND USAID".

6. COMMENT: IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THE GOJ IS TRYING TO PRESENT US WITH A FAIT ACCOMPLI, WHETHER COOKE GENUINELY RECEIVED THE IMPRESSION ON HIS TRIP THAT THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION LOAN WAS PROXIMATE ENOUGH TO WARRANT THE RISK OF A PREMATURE ANNOUNCEMENT NOW, OR WHETHER THE RPIME MINISTER IS MERELY PLAYING HIS USUAL GAME OF TRYING TO STRIKE A BALANCE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND THE "THIRD WORLD" AS WELL AS ANNOUNCING AS IMMINENT FACT ANY DESIRED PROJECT, WHATEVER THE STAGE OF NEGOTIATION OR EVEN FEASIBILITY. IT COULD BE THAT ALL THREE OF THESE ELEMENTS ARE PRESENT. GERARD

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